

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are in this application and are presented for consideration. By this amendment, Applicant has amended claims 1, 3, 9, 11 and 17.

Claims 1-6, 8-12, 14-18 and 20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yokocho et al. (US 6,123,216) in view of Robinson (WO 92/06324).

The present invention relates to a tank for oils or liquids. A critical feature of the tank is that the tank comprises an impermeable duct in which one end of a fastening means is located such that the one end of the fastening means is surrounded by the volume of the tank. The arrangement of the fastening means within the impermeable duct provides particular advantages when the tank is fastened in a motor vehicle. The end of the fastening means within the impermeable duct advantageously allows the tank to be connected in confined spaces in the motor vehicle because at a least a portion of a tool is able to fit into the duct to turn the fastening means such that the tank is fastened in the motor vehicle. This advantageously allows for a greater portion of a tool to be provided within the duct so that the tool does not stick out from a side of the tank as provided in conventional tanks.

The prior art as a whole fails to teach or suggest the combination of a fastening means having an end that is located within an impermeable duct and surrounded by the tank volume as claimed. The Office Action takes the position that it would be obvious to surround one end of a fastening means in view of Yokocho et al. and Robinson. However, Yokocho et al. in combination with Robinson does not direct a person of ordinary skill in the art toward a tank having an impermeable duct wherein one end of a fastening means is arranged in the

impermeable duct with the end of the fastening means surrounded by a tank volume as featured in the present invention. Yokocho et al. discloses a tank wherein bolts 81, 82 are provided along the periphery of the tank and Robinson discloses a vessel having columnar steel rods 20 that are externally screw threaded outwardly of the interior of the vessel to facilitate location of the vessel. However, neither Yokocho et al. nor Robinson teach or suggest the combination of an end of a fastening means that is surrounded by a tank volume as claimed. The references as a whole fail to be concerned with the problem of mounting a tank in areas of a motor vehicle that have very little space. Compared with Yokocho et al. and Robinson, the tank of the present invention has a duct in which one end of a fastening means is provided such that the tank volume surrounds the end of the fastening means. This advantageously allows the tank to be placed in the motor vehicle with the fastening means in the duct. This prevents the end of the fastening means from projecting from the side of the tank as provided in conventional tanks, such as the tank shown in Robinson. The fastening means being located within the duct allows a tool to be simply inserted in the duct to turn the fastening means so that the tank connects to the motor vehicle. Yokocho et al. and Robinson provide no teaching and no suggestion that would direct a person of ordinary skill in the art to provide an end of a fastening means within an impermeable duct of a tank as featured in the prior art since neither Yokocho et al. nor Robinson disclose an end of a fastening means that is surrounded by a tank volume as featured in the present invention. Robinson clearly teaches that it is critical that the columnar steel rods 20 extend from each side of the tank so that the tank can be positioned within an area of connection. As such, the prior art as a whole does not establish a prima facie

case of obviousness since the prior art as a whole provides no teaching or suggestion that would direct a person of ordinary skill in the art toward surrounding one end of a fastening means with a tank volume as featured in the claimed combination. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner favorably consider claims 1, 9 and 15 as now presented and all claims that respectively depend thereon.

Claims 7, 13 and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yokocho et al. and Robinson and further in view of Alleaume (US 3,511,003).

Although Alleaume teaches a fixed land device that constitutes a closed, fluid-tight enclosure, the references as a whole fail to suggest the combination of features claimed. Specifically, Yokocho et al. and Robinson provide no suggestion or teaching for the combination of at least one fastening means that has one end that is surrounded by a tank volume. As such, the references together do not teach or suggest the combination of features claimed. One of ordinary skill in the art is presented with various concepts, but these concepts do not provide any direction as to combining the features claimed. Accordingly, all claims define over the prior art as a whole.

Favorable consideration on the merits is requested.

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